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SUBJECT: U.S.-TURKEY POLICY PLANNING CONSULTATIONS: DATE
CONFIRMED, PROPOSED AGENDA

11. (U) This contains an action request: please see para 8.

12. (U) Turkish MFA Deputy Director General for Policy Planning Atilla Gunay informed us that the Turkish side accepts the proposed date of February 22 for bilateral policy planning talks. Ambassador Altay Cengizer, who will shortly take over the Director General position for policy planning, will lead the talks for the Turks (Cengizer, the outgoing adviser for FM Gul, is well-versed on U.S.-Turkish relations and will accompany the Minister to Washington this weekend).

13. (U) We understand as well that Mr. Waxman plans to spend February 23 in Istanbul, meeting with think tanks and NGOs.

14. (U) We explained how talks usually proceed from the USG point of view -- four to six hours of talks, including a working lunch, with topics and which side will take the lead agreed in advance. That coincides with how the Turks prefer to proceed as well.

15. (SBU) In terms of topics, we sketched out S/P's proposals -- democracy/good governance, nonproliferation, energy, and Russia/Central Asia/the Caucasus. DDG Gunay, in consultation with Ambassador Cengizer, proposed the following expanded list:

--Introduction: Working methods of policy planning units of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the US Department of State

--Priorities of Turkish and American Foreign Policy

--Relations with the EU

--Kosovo

--Middle East (to include Palestine - Israel, Lebanon and Iran)

--South Caucasus

--Central Asia and Afghanistan

--Energy Security

--BMENA, Democratization and Good Governance

--Relations with China and the Future of China

Gunay said they intended to include nonproliferation under the democratization heading.

16. (SBU) The Turkish proposal is ambitious, but broadens the field to include some current Turkish priorities - notably, the Middle East. Given the current focus in this region, we strongly support including the Middle East and Iran as an opportunity to both lay out our thinking on these topics and draw the Turks out. The proposed addition of China shows the Turks are thinking farther afield.

17. (SBU) These talks could not be more timely. They form a cornerstone of the Strategic Dialogue agreed by Secretary Rice and FM Gul last July, and come as Turkey faces a year of

difficult domestic and regional politics. It is also a year with potential pitfalls in U.S.-Turkish relations and having the opportunity to address a range of issues where both our countries have much at stake - and where we would benefit mutually from cooperation - will be key.

18. (U) Action request: Please provide feedback on the proposed Turkish agenda soonest so we can have a focused agenda in place before February 22.

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